

# The New York Times POLL

Dec. 14-18, 2011

Total N= 992

Margin of sampling error = + / – 3 percentage points

*All trends are from New York Times/CBS News polls unless otherwise noted.  
Asterisk indicates registered respondents only.*

62. Do you think the Social Security system will have the money available to provide the benefits you expect for your retirement?

	Yes	No	Already get SS (vol.)	DK/NA
6/81	30	54	–	15
1/83	27	58	6	6
1/90	36	52	–	12
1/92C	40	53	–	7
3/95A	35	53	–	12
2/96	27	60	8	5
10/96 CBS	36	54	10	
10/96 CBS	32	55	7	6
1/97 CBS	32	54	9	5
8/97 CBS	26	58	9	7
5/11/99 CBS	29	55	8	8
5/10-13/00	41	45	7	7
2/10-12/01	39	48	6	7
3/8-12/01	37	49	9	5
6/14-18/01	30	56	8	6
8/28-31/02 CBS	35	53	8	4
1/15-17/02 CBS	34	46	10	11
11/20-24/02	28	55	9	8
11/18-21/04	31	51	7	10
1/14-18/05	34	54	7	5
2/24-28/05	34	49	9	8
4/13-16/05 CBS	36	51	8	5
5/20-24/05 CBS	31	55	8	6
6/10-15/05	31	51	12	6
9/10-15/11	33	50	10	7
<b>12/14-18/11</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>7</b>

63. Do you think the Medicare system will have the money available to provide the benefits you expect for your retirement?

	Yes	No	Already get (vol.)	DK/NA
4/23-26/84	30	52	–	19
12/9-11/95	28	61	–	12
11/23-24/97	19	63	9	9
<b>12/14-18/11</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>9</b>

64. The federal deficit is projected to grow sharply in coming decades. As far as you know, which of these domestic programs will probably increase the nation's deficit the most? Is it 1. Medicare, 2. Social Security, 3. programs for the poor, like Medicaid or food stamps, 4. unemployment benefits and programs, or 5. veterans' benefits?

	Medicare	Social Security	Programs for poor	Unemployment	Veterans	DK/NA
12/14-18/11	22	14	27	17	5	14

65. Currently, at age 65, most Americans qualify for Medicare, the government health program for the elderly. Do you think that the money you have paid or will pay in Medicare taxes during your working years will cover the cost of your Medicare benefits, or won't it be enough to cover those benefits?

	Yes	No	Don't pay taxes (vol.)	DK/NA
12/14-18/11	25	67	1	6

66. Currently, most Americans will qualify for Social Security benefits by age 67. Do you think that the money you have paid or will pay in Social Security taxes during your working years will cover the cost of the your Social Security benefits, or won't it be enough to cover those benefits?

	Yes	No	Don't pay taxes (vol.)	DK/NA
12/14-18/11	30	63	1	6

67. As you may know, the Medicare program is projected to pay out more in benefits than it will collect from taxpayers. If you HAD to choose ONE change in order to reduce the Medicare program deficit, which of the following changes would you prefer: 1. reduce benefits for current Medicare recipients; or 2. reduce the benefits for future recipients; or 3. raise the premiums paid by current recipients; or 4. raise the taxes paid by current workers?

	Reduce benefits for current Medicare recipients	Reduce benefits for future recipients	Raise premiums of current recipients	Raise taxes of current workers	DK/NA
12/14-18/11					
All	8	16	22	37	17

68. Think about all the taxes you pay to the federal government, and think about the benefits you receive now, in the past, and in the future. Would you say that altogether, you will get more benefits from the federal government than you pay in taxes, or will you pay more in taxes than you get back from the federal government, or will it be about equal?

	Will get more	Will pay more	Will be equal	Depends	DK/NA
12/14-18/11	12	55	28	1	4

69. Now thinking about different approaches to reduce the federal budget deficit, how big a role do you think each of the following should play in an overall deficit reduction strategy? Should...Increasing taxes for all Americans play a major role, minor role, or no role at all in reducing the federal budget deficit?

	Major role	Minor role	No role at all	DK/NA
<b>12/14-18/11</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>6</b>

70. Should...Increasing taxes for wealthy Americans play a major role, minor role, or no role at all in reducing the federal budget deficit?

	Major role	Minor role	No role at all	DK/NA
<b>12/14-18/11</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>

71. Should... Reducing Social Security and Medicare benefits for current and future beneficiaries play a major role, minor role, or no role at all in reducing the federal budget deficit?

	Major role	Minor role	No role at all	DK/NA
<b>12/14-18/11</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>3</b>

101. Are you, or is any member of your immediate family, covered by Medicare?

	Yes, self	Yes, other	Yes, self and other	No	DK/NA
4/5-12/10	13	12	9	66	1
<b>12/14-18/11</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>1</b>

102. Are you, or is any member of your immediate family, currently receiving Social Security retirement benefits?

	Yes, self	Yes, other	Yes, self and other	No	DK/NA
4/5-12/10	12	12	8	67	1
<b>12/14-18/11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>1</b>

103. Are you, or is any member of your immediate family, currently receiving government benefits such as unemployment, school lunches, food stamps, Medicaid, or other public assistance?

	Yes, self	Yes, other	Yes, self and other	No	DK/NA
<b>12/14-18/11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>1</b>